

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 9 and 11 to 22 are pending in the application, of which claims 1, 3, 12 and 14 are independent. Favorable reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Initially, Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication that claims 3 to 5, 14 to 16 and 21 contain allowable subject matter. As shown above, Applicant has rewritten claims 3 and 14 as independent claims. Claims 3 and 14 are therefore believed to be allowable.

In the Office Action, claims 6 and 17 were objected to as having insufficient antecedent basis for limitations in the claim. As shown above, Applicant has amended the claims to address the alleged antecedent basis problem. Withdrawal of the objection is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 2, 6, 9 to 13, 17, 20 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,568,437 (Jamal); and claims 7, 8, 18, and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 over Jamal in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,856,923 (Jones). As shown above, Applicant has amended the independent claims to define the invention with greater clarity. In view of these amendments, withdrawal of the art rejection is respectfully requested.

Amended independent claim 1 is directed to a method for recording test information to identify locations of errors in integrated circuits (ICs). The method includes scanning ICs with an input signal. Each IC has data locations. The method also includes comparing outputs at locations with expected values for the data locations and storing addresses in a buffer for data locations at which an output does not equal an expected value. After a pre-determined number

of addresses are stored in the buffer, the addresses for data locations at which an output does not equal an expected value are not stored in the buffer.

The prior art reference Jamal is not understood to disclose or suggest the foregoing features of claim 1. In particular, Jamal does not teach that after *a pre-determined number of addresses* are stored in the buffer, the addresses for data locations at which an output does not equal an expected value are *not stored* in the buffer (emphasis added).

Rather, Jamal is directed to built-in self tester (BIST) that tests the read/write memory (RAM) on an integrated circuit. The BIST compares test data with the retrieved data from the RAM memory locations. If the retrieved data does not correspond to the test data, then the BIST generates an error signal, which in return, causes the BIST to store the address (k) in a error register (*see* col. 3, lines 1-10; col. 7, lines 33-34). The method repeats the test for all the addresses, until the number of un-tested addresses (k) equals zero. *See* col. 7, lines 34-45.

Nowhere does Jamal disclose or suggest not storing in the buffer the addresses at which an output does not equal an expected value. Neither does Jamal disclose or suggest not storing these addresses after a pre-determined number of addresses have been stored in the buffer. In fact, Jamal continues storing addresses into the error register until all the addresses (k) have been tested (i.e. when the number of untested addresses (k) equals zero). *See* col. 7, lines 25-39.

Thus, for at least these reasons, Applicant submits that claim 1 is patentable over Jamal.

Amended independent claim 12 is a system claim that corresponds, roughly, to claim 1. Claim 12 is believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons noted above.

Jones, which was cited solely for its disclosure of testing ICs on a burn-in board or on a wafer, is not understood to add anything that would remedy the foregoing deficiencies of Jamal vis-à-vis the claims.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Each of the dependent claims is also believed to define patentable features of the invention. Each dependent claim partakes of the novelty of its corresponding independent claim and, as such, has not been discussed specifically herein.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because of the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed.

Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the application is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

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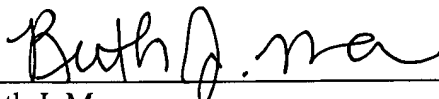
Applicant's undersigned attorney can be reached at the address shown below. All telephone calls should be directed to the undersigned at (617) 368-2158.

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Respectfully submitted,

Date: _____

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